

# Naperville Heritage Society Library/Archives Collections

## Guide to Collection

Scott Family Collection  
*Name of the Collection*

Coll 10  
*Collection Number*

1832--1941  
*Date Range*

3"/1  
*Linear Feet/Boxes*

1/11  
*Number of Folders/Items*

March 16, 2011  
*Processed by/Date*

### Description

The Scott family were Naperville pioneers in every sense of the word. They were the first white settlers in this area in 1830 along the DuPage River, in an area carved out in 1839 as part of Will County. Stephen Scott, originally from Connecticut, was a seafaring man who owned a schooner bearing his name. After marriage to Hadassah Trask, the couple settled in Unadilla, New York, where Willard Sr. was born in 1808. The family lived in Maryland for ten years before looking for property in the West. In 1826 they occupied the first dwelling belonging to whitemen on the shore of Gross Point, now called Evanston.

Willard Scott Sr. started his own family in an equally adventurous way. On a hunting trip in 1829 in Holderman's Grove, now Newark, he met Caroline Hawley, the daughter of his host family, and proposed to her on his return two weeks later. Willard served in the Black Hawk War of 1832 and was the first constable in the settlement that same year. Stephen and Hadassah moved to Naperville in 1837 and were joined by Willard and Caroline's family in 1838. Willard erected the Naperville Hotel and managed it for eight years before selling it to James Dunlap. In 1846 Willard started a general store called Willard Scott and Company with his son Thadeus as partner. Willard's customers found him so trustworthy that they banked their money with him, which led in 1854 to him starting a private banking business in his store. He later erected a bank building just north of the store. By the late 1860s, Scott sold his store to his son Willard Jr., and devoted full time to the bank until his death in 1892. When the bank was discontinued in 1907 it was the oldest banking institution in the state. Willard Scott Sr.'s home, built in 1867, still stands at the northwest corner of Franklin and Washington Streets.

Tragedy struck the Scott family with the accidental death of Thadeus Scott in New York in the 1860s. Willard Jr. had worked in the Scott store a few months before enlisting in the Northern Army during the Civil War and was discharged as a First Lieutenant. He had marched with General Sherman through Georgia and North Carolina. He met his wife Etta Cooper during his residence in Columbus, Wisconsin from 1858 to 1861. After returning from the war, Willard Jr. took his brother Thadeus's place at the store and made it even more prosperous, building an addition in 1876. On the second floor of the addition he built Scott Hall, which became a social

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and cultural center for the community. Willard Jr.'s home, built in 1868 at 19 East Jefferson, was the birthplace of the Naperville Woman's Club, and the site of an active social life with wife Etta. Willard Scott, Jr. was a Naperville trustee for many years and served a four year term as mayor. He was the Village's first fire marshall and in his tenure the first fire engine was purchased in 1871. He sponsored the subdividing of the area known as the Park Addition to Naperville. In 1905 Willard Jr. sold his store to the firm of Broecker and Spiegler. He died in 1932, his wife in 1941, and they had no children.

Willard Jr.'s brother Alvin worked in the family store, loved fine horses, and was the supervisor of Lisle Township in 1906. He and his wife Emeline Gould had three children, Alvin Jr. (Bay), Ella and Clara. The girls died at an early age. Alvin Jr. worked at his grandfather's bank until it was dissolved in 1907, then owned an insurance and real estate business. He married Elizabeth Wilson in 1888 and their only child Robert died in 1907. He was mayor of Naperville from 1903 to 1905. Alvin Jr. died in 1926 and his wife in 1949. Scott School in Naperville continues to honor the Scott family heritage as pioneers, patriots, businessmen, and community leaders.

This collection includes valuable certificates attesting to Willard Scott Sr.'s service in the Black Hawk War and Willard Scott Jr.'s enlistment in the Civil War. There are papers from the Scott store and bank, Willard Scott Jr.'s Civil War pension certificate, an obituary for Robert Willard Scott, and the memorial program for Willard Scott Jr.'s wife Etta Cooper Scott.

## Inventory

- \*Certificate for Willard Scott from the State of Illinois, Office of the Adjutant General, attesting to his service in the Black Hawk War from July 19 to August 15, 1832 with Captain Joseph Napier's Company of Mounted Volunteers, against the Sac and Fox Indians
- \*Stationery from the Willard Scott & Co. store, September 11, 1859
- \*Newspaper, Willard Scott & Co's Paper, Number 1, Volume 1, Spring, 1860
- \*Certificate for Willard Scott, Jr. from the State of Illinois, Office of the Adjutant General, attesting to his service as a Second Lieutenant with Company B, 105th Regiment, Volunteer Infantry, from September 2, 1862 through June 7, 1865. Promoted to First Lieutenant September 30, 1864
- \*Certificate of military discharge for Willard Scott, Jr. from the U.S. Army, June 7, 1865
- \*Promissory note to Julia E. Dudley for \$250 at ten per cent interest, paid to the office of W. Scott & Co., April 2, 1870. Back of note has dates of payments
- \*Poem for a Happy New Year's Greeting from Willard Scott & Co., January 1, 1875
- \*Obituary for Robert Willard Scott, 1889--1907, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Scott
- \*Certificate for Willard Scott as an honorary member of the Lincoln Farm Association, April 29, 1908
- \*Certificate from the U. S. Bureau of Pensions for Willard Scott Jr. entitling him to a pension for his service in the Civil War, the pension to commence May 31, 1912

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\*Program for a memorial service for Etta Cooper Scott, 1846--1941, conducted February 5, 1941 at home, the Congregational Church of Naperville and Naperville Cemetery